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NETWORK A MEETING RECORD

**Network A Plenary Meeting
March 28-31, 1995, Volterra, Italy**

Participants

Friedrich Plank (Austria)
Aletta Grisay (Belgium)
Luc Van de Poele (Belgium)
Monique Bélanger (Canada)
Douglas Hodgkinson (Canada)
Kimmo Leimu (Finland)
Jacqueline Levasseur (France)
Dieter Schwedt (Germany)
Thomas Kellaghan (Ireland)
Chiara Croce (Italy)
Lucio Pusci (Italy)
Gerbo Korevaar (Netherlands)
Jules Peschar (Netherlands)
Rosemary Renwick (New Zealand)
Marit Granheim (Norway)
Gertrudes Amaro (Portugal)
Guillermo Gil (Spain)
Sten Petersson (Sweden)
Robert Wood (United Kingdom)
Eugene Owen (United States, Chair)
Jay Moskowitz (United States)
Norberto Bottani (CERI)
Andreas Schleicher (CERI)

Purpose of the Meeting

The plenary session had the following objectives:

- To inform Network members of forthcoming international surveys that could serve as data for EAG4 and EAG5 indicators
- To propose an initial list of indicators for EAG4 and EAG5
- To review and provide guidance for the next revision of the Network Data Strategy
- To review and discuss the revised version of the Inventory of National Assessments on Student Competencies in the OECD countries
- To provide the Network briefings on the work of the CCC and GOALS subgroups.

Welcome

The meeting was chaired by Eugene Owen. We were kindly welcomed to Volterra by the Head of the Town Council, Dr. Tommaselli, an education official from Pisa, and Dr. Caiola read a welcoming statement from the Italian Ministry of Education. Throughout the meeting our Italian hosts were extremely gracious in their hospitality. Special thanks to Chiara and Lucio.

Norberto brought us greetings from Tom Alexander who had hoped to join the Network for a part of the meeting. However, he regrets that this is not possible.

Norberto described the changing face of OECD as its constituency is broadened to include newly developed and developing countries. This changing face comes at a time that the OECD is also determining its programmatic agenda for the next 5 years. In early 1996, it will be decided if OECD continues to conduct education work. This appears likely because of the emphasis that OECD is placing on unemployment and its causes and the decision to expand the collection and dissemination of education statistics. The process for renewing education's mandate include a fall meeting of the OECD Education Committee, a January 1996 meeting of the Ministers of Education, and a May 1996 final decision by the Council of OECD which is comprised of the Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs of member countries.

Paralleling this calendar is the work on education statistics and indicators. In Lahti, member countries will have an opportunity to consider the achievements of the INES project and give suggestions for future directions. Over the summer a document will be prepared describing basic proposals. It will be presented to CERI in September. As the formal OECD review process continues the basic proposals will be "boiled down" to a few key proposals for the Ministerial meeting.

Norberto clarified that the INES project and its current infrastructure continues through the end of 1996. The next objective is the publication of EAG4, scheduled for December 1996. Each Network is to propose indicators for inclusion by May of this year. The PRAG will review the proposals and decide in September which indicators to include. This review process has been introduced to better target the indicators and control its growth. The PRAG will give priority to longitudinal indicators and those that examine differences and inequalities between and within member countries.

From the Network, the Secretariat expects results indicators, a detailed plan of future work and the data strategy paper must evolve into a decision document.

Forthcoming Data

Eugene invited Al Beaton of Boston College, Bill Schmidt of Michigan State University, Scott Murray of Statistics Canada, and Tjeerd Plomp of the IEA to discuss potential data sources for EAG4 and EAG5 and the exploration of future cooperation with the IEA.

Al Beaton is the Study Director for TIMSS. Al presented a comprehensive overview of the TIMSS study. TIMSS is collecting data on the content, performance expectations, and

perspectives in maths and sciences for populations of 9, 13, and final year of secondary school. Age 13, known as population 2 is required for study participation. Presently, about 45 countries are involved in TIMSS. The project is currently in the field collecting data. In addition to a test of student performance, TIMSS also is obtaining information from a school questionnaire, a student attitude questionnaire, and a teacher survey. The first report will be available in September 1996 for basic information on population 1 and 2. Examples of the data presentations in report one include international comparison chart and percent populations in quartiles chart. A complete research report is expected one year later.

Al was receptive to calculating indicators for EAG4, although he expressed concern about the Network's deadlines. It appears that he can have information by June which would just make it possible to publish in EAG4.

Bill Schmidt is directing the TIMSS Curriculum Analysis Study. This study is an examination of the intended curriculum using national curriculum, syllabi, and content analysis of principal textbooks. The study is at three levels. First, a detailed content analysis of textbooks and curriculum guides, topic tracing, and in-depth topic tracing for six topics in maths and sciences, respectively. The first report is scheduled for fall 1996 with two more reports in 1996 and then incorporation and linkage to the TIMSS research report, scheduled for September 1997.

Bill provided the Network with a large array of prototype tables and charts. Bill noted that they were seeking advice on how best to present the information. The presentation demonstrated the complexity of reducing the curriculum analysis to a few key indicators.

Scott Murray is the International Coordinator for the International Adult Literacy Study (IALS) which is now going on in nine countries (with at least four more countries set to join in a second wave). IALS is an outgrowth of work in Canada and the United States as is directed toward shedding light on the impact of the population's educational achievement on competitiveness and productivity. The test is a performance assessment of prose literacy, document literacy, and numeracy. The first report is expected in December 1995. In contrast to TIMSS, IALS is a government sponsored activity. It is being overseen by Statistics Canada and the international components implemented by the Educational Testing Service. Scott provided the Network with his assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the IALS effort.

Taken together, the presentations of Al, Bill, and Scott (with addition of data forthcoming from GOALS) means that the Network will have a large amount of outcome data on which to draw for the next two editions of EAG.

IEA

In the last year the Network and OECD have been interested in securing a source of student outcome data on a regular basis. This interest led to the opening of an exploratory dialogue with IEA on the issue. Tjeerd Plomp was invited to the meeting by Eugene to have him share with the Network what IEA is and what it would like to see.

The IEA is 35 years old with members from 55 countries. Tjeerd characterized the IEA as an organization in transition. The IEA has been having problems because of a discrepancy between what the IEA thought important and what the outside world thought important. As a group of education researchers and evaluators they did not necessarily share the same concerns as national policymakers. Also, the IEA is faced with the fact that the studies are becoming more costly and they lack a tradition of dealing with governments (increasingly the source of funding).

The questions to Tjeerd emphasized the changes IEA is going through and what was willing and able to do regarding student assessments of the kind envisioned by the Network in its data strategy. Among other issues were the ownership and timing of use of data.

Future Indicators

Given the large amount of data and the limits of EAG the Network will need to decide what and when to develop specific indicators. Eugene proposed an initial list. Network members provided reactions and additional suggestions. It was decided that Eugene would prepare a recommendation (attached) that would be circulated to the Network in April. The revised proposal would be sent to the Secretariat in May for consideration by the PRAG.

Still to be determined is the mechanism for the preparation of the indicators—most of which rely on TIMSS and IALS data.

GOALS

Marit provided an update for the full Network on the work of the GOALS subgroup and the training which took place earlier in the week. See GOALS notes for more details.

CCC

Jules provided a progress report on the CCC feasibility study. The Netherlands, Hungary, and Norway have joined the feasibility study. See CCC notes for more details.

Data Strategy

After the data strategy meeting held on Saturday and Sunday, a substantially revised draft was prepared and circulated to the Network. The Network provided (in 2 sessions) general and specific comments. These comments will be incorporated into a revised draft to be circulated for comment in May.

The new draft was well received overall. Some of the issues to be considered for the revision include:

- Relationship to other Networks
- Draft status of document
- Need for stable national units to carry out the assessments
- Less direct statement of costs
- Revised figure for framework
- Elimination of core/non-core domain distinction

National Assessments Survey

Jacqueline presented updated information on the National Assessments Survey. There is wide variation in grades and subjects, with sciences and maths the most common. A discussion among members highlighted the desirability of continuing to update the survey and to provide a way for Network members to share and learn about what is occurring in other country's national assessments. Eugene will work with Jacqueline on these issues.

Fall Meeting and Next Steps

The next Network meeting will take place the week of November 6. Thomas will inquire as to Ireland hosting the meeting.

Between now and the next meeting the Network is:

- Redrafting the data strategy
- Participating in the General Assembly meeting
- Preparing Proposed Indicators
- Revising and implementing GOALS survey
- Completing phase one of CCC feasibility study
- Updating the National Assessments Survey
- Preparing a report for the General Assembly meeting

Proposed EAG Indicators

EAG	Indicator	Source
IV	Incorporation of National Goals	GOALS Survey
IV	Multiple Comparisons in Maths and Sciences	TIMSS
IV	Distributions in Maths and Sciences	TIMSS
IV	Within and Between School Variances in Maths and Sciences	TIMSS
IV	Gender Differences in Maths and Sciences	TIMSS
IV	Distribution of Different Levels of Proficiency for Adult Literacy	IALS
IV	Gender Differences in Adult Literacy	IALS
V	Responsibility for Establishing and Evaluating National Education Goals	GOALS Survey
V	Indicator(s) on attitudes and expectations toward maths and sciences	TIMSS
V	Indicator(s) on performance levels of low and high income students	TIMSS
V	Indicator(s) on intended curriculum linked to delivered curriculum linked to goals	TIMSS – Curriculum Analysis
V	Differences in Adult Literacy by Educational Level	IALS
V	Differences in Adult Literacy by Labor Force Sector	IALS
VI	Indicator(s) on overall outcomes of CCCs (Spider chart)	CCC Study
VI	Indicator on differences between population 1 and population 2	TIMSS
VI	Indicator on means available to teachers to teach maths and sciences	TIMSS – Teacher Survey
VI	Indicators on sub-domains of maths and sciences	TIMSS
VI	Indicator on teaching and learning	TIMSS – Teacher Survey
VI	Indicator on changes from SIMS to TIMSS	SIMS and TIMSS
VII	Indicator(s) on CCC profiles (across subgroups)	CCC Study